

TOWN OF GROTON  
SELECT BOARD MEETING  
November 19, 2019

**In Attendance: John Rescigno, Tony Albert and Sara Smith (Administrative Assistant)**  
**Absent: Ron Madan**

**Audience Members Present**

John called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

**MINUTE APPROVAL**

**John motioned to approve the Work Session Meeting minutes of November 5, 2019 as written, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

**John motioned to approve the Select Board Meeting minutes of November 5, 2019 as written, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

*Public Hearing- Unanticipated Funds*

John called the Public Hearing on unanticipated funds to order at 7:01pm.

The Select Board explained that the Town received a check for \$10,279.17 and the description was October 2019 Municipal Aid. The State explained this payment is for aid to cities and towns and is part of the state's biennial budget that was recently passed. We will receive another payment next Oct. 1st as well. This money, if received by Oct 15<sup>th</sup> (which it was), may be considered unanticipated revenue under RSA 31:95-b and may be expended pursuant to RSA 31:95-b, II-IV. Sara pulled up the RSA and it states "Chapter 346 indicates that municipal aid received by October 15, 2019 may be considered "unanticipated revenue," accepted and expended under the provisions of RSA 31:95-b, II-IV, whether or not a municipality has adopted that statute. For unanticipated money in the amount of \$10,000 or more, RSA 31:95-b requires the governing body to hold a public hearing on the action to be taken, with notice of the time, place and subject of the hearing published at least seven days before the hearing is held. For unanticipated money less than \$10,000, the governing body must post notice of the funds in the agenda and include notice in the minutes of the public meeting at which the money is discussed."

Sara emailed DRA and NHMA to see if the money has to be used for certain things and when it has to be used by. Michelle from DRA explained to Sara that it can be used as the RSA states and can be used as unanticipated funds. DRA mentioned we can use it towards the July 2019 storm damages or anything else that we have not already budgeted for.

John mentioned that Primex, our insurance company, requested a few items that be changed including the security system, at the Town Garage. The quote we received was for \$3,359.19. Tony and John agreed to use some of the money towards this. The Emergency Management Radio needs to be moved from the Police Department to the Select Board office. The quote that was received for this was for \$753.20. John and Tony agreed to use some of this money towards this and to also see about moving the radio antenna to the other side of the roof and higher up which may make the cost go up. John and Tony agreed to use any remainder money towards the 2019 storm damages. **John voted to use the unanticipated funds in the amount of**

**\$10,279.17 towards the security system at the garage, moving the emergency radio and the remainder to go towards the July 2019 storm damages, Tony 2<sup>nd</sup>, so voted.**

Lou asked what the cost was for the dry hydrant was on North Groton Road was. It was explained this was paid for from the Groton Wind donation of \$5,000.00 and it isn't 100% complete yet but will be done within that \$5,000.00. Lou mentioned it would be nice to get one on River Road. Tony said that we need a water supply that is 6 feet deep. Lou said he has a pond that is deep enough and he would be willing to put a dry hydrant there. The Select Board agreed that we could look at this next year for another option.

Slim mentioned that the State will be working on the River Road Dam and we should see if they can put a hydrant there. Tony mentioned it isn't a pressurized hydrant so that is too far away as it has to be within 20 feet.

**Having no other business to conduct, John motioned to close the public hearing at 7:15pm, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

#### *Amended Yield Certificates for Map 3 Lot 6-3 and Map 3 Lot 6-2*

There was an issue with the new spreadsheet and the formulas with the new timber tax amounts. The last two report of cuts and yield certificates that were done were way too high. The error was found and the spreadsheets were corrected so the amended yield certificates need to be signed. For Map 3 Lot 6-3 the correct timber tax amount is \$353.13 and for Map 3 Lot 6-2 the correct timber tax amount is \$1,197.51. This was caught before we sent the large bill to Map 3 Lot 6-2 but Map 3 Lot 6-3 was already sent. They have been informed that there was an error and that they will be getting a corrected bill. **John motioned to sign the amended yield certificates for Map 3 Lot 6-3 and Map 3 Lot 6-2, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

#### *Building Permit Map 1 Lot 54-2*

The owners submitted a building permit for Map 1 Lot 54-2 for a 15x24 shed. This will not be heated or cooled. **John motioned to sign the building permit for Map 1 Lot 54-2, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

#### *Building Permit Map 5 Lot 107*

The owners submitted a building permit for Map 5 Lot 107 for a 336 square foot shed. This will not be heated or cooled. **John motioned to sign the building permit for Map 5 Lot 107 Tony 2nd, so voted.**

#### *Bank of NH information*

At the last meeting Sara explained that Megan Ryder from the Bank of NH emailed the Town to see if she could set up a meeting on Friday, November 18, 2019 to explain what they can offer the Town. The Town currently uses Meredith Village Savings bank. The Select Board recommended that Sara email to see if there is anything, they can email about what they have to offer. She did email back the following information:

*"Bank of New Hampshire is the oldest and largest independent bank headquartered in New Hampshire. Over the last 188 years, Bank of New Hampshire has grown to 24 offices state wide and more than \$1.5 billion in assets. This year we reported record earnings which increased by 25% to \$12.6 million. Our commitment is to the New Hampshire communities we serve, including more than 50 local municipal relationships. Our mission is to exceed customer expectations and enhance the communities where we serve, live and work. Whether a municipality is looking to improve efficiencies or seeking better valued services, we offer products designed for their unique needs. This year we developed a new product and we're proud to offer the Municipal Investment Pool Savings account. This savings account offers a competitive rate, safety and liquidity. Current year-to-date annual percentage yield is 2.50%. Along with the Municipal Investment Pool Account we offer various deposit accounts including Commercial Checking, Money Markets, Repurchase Agreements and Certificates of Deposits. For Cash Management needs, we offer solutions to improve funds collection, funds disbursement and services to help mitigate fraud. Is there another date that would work for you or your town treasurer?"*

Ruth provided her feedback that she is quite content with Meredith Village Savings Bank. The location is great. She was also concerned about all the changes that would need to take place if we switched banks, especially those with the DMV. It was agreed to stay with Meredith Village Savings Bank.

*Abatement Application- Map 5 Lot 93*

Due to a change in the property assessment valuation, this resulted in an overpayment in the spring of \$31.00. **John motioned to sign the abatement application for Map 5 Lot 93, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

**SELECT BOARD ITEMS:**

*Local Septic Plan Approval, Map 6 Lot 101*

Colin Brown dropped off a Septic Plan and local approval for Map 6 Lot 101. All the information is correct. **John motioned to sign the local approval for Map 6 Lot 101, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

*Tax Rate*

John mentioned there is an increase in the tax rate. The overall increase is \$2.83. The town's portion of the increase is \$0.54. The local school increased \$2.64. Each year there are budget meetings for the school budget and currently no residents attend these meetings. John explained he attends and more residents need to attend the school budget meetings so they can speak up about the increases. John said when the tax rate goes up people call the Town offices or come to the Select Board meeting to discuss the towns increase but no one calls the school about their increase and no one goes to the school budget meetings.

John explained that the Towns portion looks at the budget which includes the warrant articles. The Select Board looks at the wants and needs and put totals together so they don't present all warrant articles to the Town, only the ones that they feel are priorities. Then the Town can vote for what they want or think the Town needs. John explained that the Town doesn't have any control over the local, state and county taxes.

Frank Grelle still doesn't understand where the windfarm money is going. John explained that the taxes would be even higher if we didn't have the revenue from the windfarm. It was explained if we didn't have that revenue to offset it the tax rate, it would be that much higher.

John explained that the Select Board does everything they can to keep taxes down and they are tax payers as well and don't want higher taxes. John and Tony explained that the money is being spent wisely and people can see by the work that is being done in Town, where the money has been spent. The Select Board once again encouraged everyone to go to the school budget meetings.

Sherry mentioned that the county bill is high and we need to see how we can get involved in those decision makings. Tony said there are county meetings.

Lou said that there are problems with education and the school with declining enrollment and the Towns unwillingness to close buildings in that school district that could be closed. People will not go near the debate to close these buildings in other towns. That is a major cost in the framework for the infrastructure. John mentioned he went through the budget line by line because there were lines that were way over budget. He questioned this but didn't get any real answers.

Slim said a few years ago we were declining in enrollment and they thought we could eliminate a building. Then the superintendent and powers to be made it possible for Hill to come to Newfound. At the last budget hearing they stated that there were 79 new kids which shows enrollment is going up again.

### *Police Chief*

Tony explained that the new Police Chief is getting setting up in the office and is getting acclimated. The Select Board signed a purchase agreement for the cruiser so we should have that in a few weeks which will allow him to get out into the community. He will be working 25-29 hours a week with flexible hours and will be working weekends. He will be attending the Select Board meetings in the future.

### **DEPARTMENT ITEMS:**

#### *Highway Department*

Bubba went over the following items regarding the Highway Department:

- They have been doing plowing and working hard on keeping the roads clear. He asked that the Town bears with them because the roads aren't set up yet which makes it hard to plow.

### **COMMITTEE UPDATES:**

#### *Cemetery Committee*

Slim mentioned they have the quote from the engraver for the name of the River Road Cemetery. It cannot be done this year due to the cold weather. Jim Gaffey will be dropping off the quote and will tell Sara if he wants it paid now or if we should encumber the funds.

### **QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS:**

#### *1214 North Groton Road*

Many residents have concerns about 1214 North Groton Road. They want to know where this stands. The renter is the one that is bringing all the junk. The owner had been in touch but we haven't heard from her and we are unable to serve her papers and she isn't responding to our emails. One resident doesn't understand if the junkyard dog said it is an illegal junkyard, why this is taking so long. The Select Board explained that we have reached out to the attorney and she is following the process and unfortunately it takes time. The attorney sent updated letters last week. The residents are concerned and the Select Board understands their concerns.

The residents stated that the owner said she was trying to evict him but he is still there. The Select Board said that the last thing they knew she was working on it but was not able to find him to give him the eviction papers. The eviction process has nothing to do with the town so we cannot do anything about him being there but we are doing everything we can about the clean-up. The next step is taking them to court but you have to be able to serve them papers to bring them to court and the attorney is working on this. It was asked if the owner is paying her taxes and Ruth said she is. The Select Board stated they understand the frustration and they are just as frustrated and are doing everything they can do. John said that people can call DES and the more that call the better. A resident asked for the number to DES and 603-271-3503 was provided. Some residents said they will call and others said they will look into if anything else can be done. This has a negative effect on them as neighbors, they will have a hard time selling their house if they wanted to when people see this property close by, they don't like having company over and it decreases the value of their home.

Lou said if anyone sees kids there, they can report it and if the police can go there it will help with the other issues. However, you have to see the kid there and call at that time. That can start another process to help this along.

John stated that we will reach out to the attorney to make sure we are doing everything that we can do. John explained that the owner had friends that were willing to help her clean the property but unfortunately even though she owns the property she doesn't own the stuff so she cannot take anything off the property. Tony

mentioned that the owner asked that we stop the legal process and we told her we couldn't and that something needs to be done.

*593 North Groton Road*

Slim said that 593 is being filled up again. The Select Board said that we will look into this again. This was a property that went to court and was a long process like 1214 North Groton Road. The court ordered the property to be cleaned up and it was cleaned up. However, it appears it is getting filled up again. The Select Board said they will send him another letter.

**Having no other business to conduct, John motioned to adjourn at 7:56pm, Tony 2<sup>nd</sup>, so voted.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Sara Smith  
Administrative Assistant